

Lomé, Togo Communiqué as agreed at the Erosion and Adaptation Project Launch Workshop for West Africa Coastal Area (WACA)

Lomé, Republic of Togo, October 21, 2016

We, the Ministers and representatives of the participating countries and international and regional organizations of the “Erosion and Adaptation Project in West Africa Coastal Areas Launch Workshop” - Technical Assistance Program for the management of the West Africa Coastal Areas (WACA), taking place in Lomé in the Republic of Togo in October 19, 20 and 21, 2016,

Recognizing that the coast is home to 31% of the West African population and 51% of the urban population and that according to projections, between 74 and 83 million people will reside in the West Africa coastal area by 2050;

Noting the fact that demographic and urban growth, in the context of sustained economic growth, results in a significant development of port, transportation infrastructures and other strategic infrastructures;

Underscoring that the growth of coastal economies requires the protection of the marine and coastal natural capital that is the foundation and enabling environment of such economies;

Recognizing the fragility and diversity of the West African coast, not only in its ecosystems and natural resources, but also pertaining to the threats and risks it faces;

Recognizing that climate change may result in the increase of degradation risks to existing infrastructure and to the living conditions of coastal populations in West Africa because of the higher frequency and intensity of extreme weather events;

Recognizing the need for swift and significant action to safeguard infrastructures and above all to protect coastal populations, especially the most vulnerable, and to ensure the resilient development of coastal communities to improve their living conditions and livelihoods;

Relying on the West African Coastal Master plan developed by the West Africa Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) with the assistance of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), validated by the Council of Environment Ministers in Dakar in 2011, and including the 2015-2016 Update that is finalized and will be published in the first quarter of 2017 by the West African Coast Observation Mission (WACOM);

Recognizing also the role of the Convention for Cooperation in the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Atlantic Coast of the West, Central and Southern Africa Region (Abidjan Convention 1981) as the institutional and policy framework for the protection of marine and coastal areas in West Africa;

Recalling Article 10 of that Convention, which calls on member states to "take all appropriate measures to prevent, reduce, combat and control coastal erosion in the area of the Convention, resulting from human activities, such as land reclamation and coastal infrastructures";

Bringing attention to the work done in the preparation of nationally determined contributions presented during COP21 for coastal area adaptation, to climate change risks and the need to implement the proposed action plans;

Recognizing the contributions of the various technical and financial partners supporting the efforts of the countries in the context of their nationally determined contributions, including the Africa Climate Business Plan (ACBP) launched by the World Bank at COP21;

Recalling the Mauritius Communiqué as agreed at the African Ministerial Conference on Ocean Economies and Climate Change in September 2016;

Supporting the strengthening process of the national and regional mechanisms for coastal observation;

Encouraged by the efforts of the World Bank Group, the WAEMU, the Nordic Development Fund and other international partners committed to put in place the necessary conditions to develop a joint investment programme between countries and partners to address coastal risks;

Expressing our thanks to the Government of the Republic of Togo for the initiative to host this launch workshop;

To this end, we make the following recommendations:

In the place of all stakeholders

- Establish a synergy of actions among stakeholders at national level;
- Establish coordination among various partners to better structure the interventions;
- Consider all existing solutions (hardware and software) and their combination;
- Ensure the awareness and participation of all key stakeholders;
- Adopt a multisectoral approach;
- Take into account all previous conventions and protocols in the current program to avoid duplication.
- Consider capacity building as a high priority.

At the place of the States

- Accelerate preparations funding requests;
- Ensure ownership by the project countries;
- Involve Ministries of Planning and Finance of the Member States in the preparation and implementation of the program;
- Set up at the sub-region and cross-border country between a framework for exchange and periodic consultation on initiatives in coastal protection.

A Partners' place

- systematically establish collaboration between experts from the countries and studies mobilized by partner offices;
- Implement technical assistance to support the states in the validation of technical studies;
- Ensure the allocation of material and financial resources needed to produce information on the coastline particularly among national authorities of the MOLOA (WACOM)
- promote bi-lateral or multilateral approach when problems are similar or cross-border;
- Accompany Nigeria to enable it to be at the same level of preparation as the rest of the Member States of the subregion;
- Accelerate support to countries facing the urgency of the problem.

Call upon:

1. The West African States to develop a common vision to strengthen West African coastal resilience to natural and anthropogenic challenges as well as climate change;
2. The West African States to commit to develop their blue economies and encourage sustainable and resilient growth to climate change in their coastal and marine sectors.
3. The West African States to strengthen regional cooperation and coordination in the management and governance of the West African coast and to examine their actions in this area from a regional perspective;
4. The West African States, to consider the expected increase of coastal risks in any investment program in the West African coastal area, to conduct comprehensive environmental and social impact studies and to improve the sustainability of planned investments as well as their benefits while taking into consideration climate change;
5. The West African States to consider the great diversity of potential investments and their combinations to deal with coastal risks; beyond and in addition to strategic grey infrastructure investments, to enhance the preservation and restoration of coastal ecosystems as natural infrastructures and to promote a spatial development planning process which takes into account these changes;
6. All parties to maintain and strengthen their efforts in coastal risks observation at national and regional levels as an essential contribution to guide investments from countries and their partners to address coastal risks;
7. All parties to ensure a better coordination between the various actors, sectors and institutions, by diversifying the technical and financial cooperation mechanisms related to coastal risk reduction and by defining investment priorities, including regional cooperation but also the development of decentralized cooperation;
8. Development partners and investors to maintain their efforts to coordinate interventions included in the multi-sector investment programs developed by the countries.
9. Entities accredited to the Green Climate Fund to submit coordinated proposals to support the West Africa Coastal Areas program - WACA.

REPRESENTED COUNTRIES

Benin
Côte d'Ivoire
Ghana
Guinea Bissau
Mauritania
Nigeria
Senegal
Togo

REPRESENTED ORGANIZATIONS

African Development Bank
Economic Community of West African States
World Bank Group
Nordic Development Fund

West African Economic and Monetary Union
International Union for Conservation and Nature
Abidjan Convention